

Message Text

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FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4059

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS PINT SEDU ET

SUBJECT: UNIVERSITY OF ASMARA RE-OPENS

1. THE UNIVERSITY OF ASMARA RESUMED CLASSES ON JULY 12 AFTER HAVING BEEN CLOSED SINCE DECEMBER 21, 1974. ACCORDING TO PRESIDENT SISTER LUELLA WALL, AMCIT, THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GAVE PERMISSION TO RE-OPEN AFTER JULY 7, 1976, AT WHICH TIME THE NATIONAL ZEMATCH CAMPAIGN WAS TO BE OFFICIALLY CONCLUDED. DESPITE FEARS THAT THE RE-OPENING WOULD HAVE TO BE POSTPONED BECAUSE OF EPMG PROCRASTINATION IN APPROVING VISAS FOR THREE NEW FOREIGN INSTRUCTORS, SISTER LUELLA RESUMED CLASSES AS PLANNED.

2. FOR THIS SUMMER SESSION, THERE ARE A TOTAL OF 130 STUDENTS DIVIDED ABOUT EQUALLY INTO TWO PROGRAMS. THE FIRST GROUP IS THE REGULAR UNDERGRADUATES WHO ARE COMPLETING THE UNFINISHED FIVE WEEKS OF THE CURTAILED FIRST SEMESTER OF THE 1974-75 ACADEMIC

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YEAR. THE OTHERS ARE NIGHT SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO MUST ALSO COMPLETE

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THAT SEMESTER. AS RESULT OF NATURAL ATTRITION AND STUDENT FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, THE ACTUAL ATTENDANCE IS DOWN FROM THE 170 WHO WERE PRE-REGISTERED MAY 1976.

3. THE UNIVERSITY CHARTER CALLS FOR A CHANCELLOR, A VICE CHANCELLOR, A PRESIDENT APPROVED BY THE CHANCELLOR, AND TWO VICE PRESIDENTS. UNDER THE FORMER GOVERNMENT, THE EMPEROR WAS THE CHANCELLOR, AND IT REMAINS UNCLEAR WHETHER TEFERI BANTI NOW FULFILLS THAT FUNCTION. THE EPMG, AS REFLECTED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, HAS NOT INDICATED ANY INTEREST IN THIS DISTINCTION, AND THEREFORE, SISTER LUELLA SERVES AS "PRESIDENT - APPOINTED". THE VICE CHANCELLOR IS AN ITALIAN SISTER WHO IS COMMANDING GENERAL OF THE CARBONI SISTERS (PIE MADRE DELLA NIGRIZIA). THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN ABLE, TO DATE, TO AVOID ANY PROBLEMS FROM THE EPMG IN THE AREA OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE.

4. ESTABLISHING THE CURRICULUM FOR THE UNIVERSITY HAS BEEN A MATTER OF CONTINUING CONCERN TO THE ADMINISTRATION. IN ADDITION TO REDEFINING AND CONCENTRATING ON CERTAIN FACULTIES, A REFORM MEASURE WHICH BEGAN IN 1972, CERTAIN COURSES HAD TO BE DROPPED WITH THE RE-OPENING BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE CONFLICTS WITH CURRENT IDEALOGICAL TRENDS IN ADDIS. SOCIOLOGY AND ECONOMICS ARE NOT OFFERED IN THIS SESSION, AND WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING THE REGULAR SEMSTER ON OCTOBER ONLY IF THEY ARE APPROVED BY THE MINED. ONLY HISTORY COURSE AVAILABLE IS A CULTURAL HISTORY OF ETHIOPIA.

5. IT SHOULD BE APPARENT FROM THE FOREGOING THAT RE-OPENING THE UNIVERSITY OF ASMARA HAS BEEN FRAUGHT WITH PITFALLS, ALL OF WHICH HAVE THUS FAR BEEN SUCCESSFULLY AVOIDED. THE UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION IS AWARE OF THE PRECARIOUS SITUATION IN WHICH IT MUST OPERATE AND HAS BEEN EXTREMELY ADROIT IN HANDLING THESE PROBLEMS.

SLUTZ

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